

# The Lake Jackson Journal



*The City of Enchantment*

VOLUME 06-29

FALL 2006

Holiday Safety Tips Inside

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

*published by the City of Lake Jackson*



# *The City of* *Enchantment*

## Greetings from the Mayor

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To the Citizens of Lake Jackson:

First, please allow me to say thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your Mayor. I am grateful for your confidence and pledge to do my very best to meet your expectations. I would also like to recognize Shane Pirtle and Charlie Golden for their outstanding work and service to our city. They will be missed.

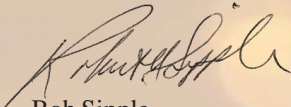
Also, please join me in a warm welcome for our two new council members, Bob Geter, and Vinay Singhanian. You have a very engaged council working hard to serve you, and continue making Lake Jackson the premier place to live, work, and play.

What makes Lake Jackson, and the Brazosport community such a special place is the countless volunteers who give their time and talent to the community. We simply could not accomplish what we do without this incredible dedication of our citizens. It is also appropriate I believe for me to mention our outstanding staff. From our city manager to our entry-level recent hire, we are fortunate to have the most dedicated people who perform their duties above and beyond expectations. You will find them always willing to help in any way.

Our commissions, such as Planning, Traffic, Keep Lake Jackson Beautiful, etc. are essential to us continuing our course. We are in need of people to serve on these commissions, and/or the many activities they perform. Please consider getting involved in one of these areas, as the more participate, the more input and less burden per individual. You can contact Alice Rodgers, City Secretary, for information and procedure for signing up.

The 2005-2006 year is coming into the fourth quarter and time has gone by fast. We are in the process of budgeting and I am proud of the fact that our services continue to be provided at one of the lowest tax rates in the state of Texas. I would also like to mention some of our accomplishments this year. We have a new Kohl's that will open late fall, a major renovation at the Mall, a new Shipley's Donuts coming soon, and many other inquiries about our great city. The Oyster Creek Hike and Bike trail is finally under construction (that's what the orange fences are for along Oyster Creek Drive). The Recreation Center is much improved with the new lighting, water treatment system, and floor covering. If you have not been there recently, please visit, as you will be very impressed with the changes. We continue to be environmentally conscious with the conversion of our fleet to CNG. With bond money approved, we will begin work on the municipal court renovation (old fire station), Dixie Drive, Brazos Oaks S/D, Jasmine, Oak Drive completion, and Winding Way improvements.

I look forward to giving you updates in the future as we embark upon exciting times. Thank you for your support in helping Lake Jackson be the "City of Enchantment".



Bob Sipple  
Mayor

## Lake Jackson Mission Statement

**It is the mission of the city of Lake Jackson to be a leader among cities and in the region at large in delivering outstanding quality services to all citizens through innovative and efficient use of resources.**

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## Directory

### — Phone Numbers —

Emergency - Only! (police, fire and ambulance)	911
Non-Emergency	415-2700
Fire/EMS	415-2710
City Hall	415-2400
Utility Billing	415-2434
Public Works	415-2430
Inspections	415-2432
Engineering	415-2413
City Manager/Administration	415-2500
Civic Center	415-2600
Recreation Center	297-4533
Humane Center	415-2700
Regional Animal Shelter	285-2340
Municipal Court	297-1031
Library	415-2590

### — City Council E-Mail —

#### Mayor

Bob Sipple      bsipple@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us

#### Councilmembers

Rob Dotson      rdotson@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us  
 Bob Geter      bgeter@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us  
 Joe Rinehart      jrinehart@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us  
 Gerald Roznovsky      groznovsky@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us  
 Vinay Singhania      vsinghania@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us

### — Department Directors —

<b>City Manager</b>	William P. Yenne wyenne@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us
<b>Asst. City Manager</b>	Modesto Mundo mmundo@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us
<b>City Engineer</b>	Sal Aguirre saguirre@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us
<b>City Secretary</b>	Alice Rodgers arodgers@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us
<b>Finance Director</b>	Pam Eaves peaves@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us
<b>Fire Marshal</b>	Randy Crim rcrim@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us
<b>Parks &amp; Rec. Director</b>	Woody Eastman weastman@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us
<b>Police Chief</b>	Paul Hromadka ljchief@brazosport.edu
<b>Public Works Director</b>	Craig Nisbett cnisbett@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us
<b>Personnel Director</b>	Carmen Williams cwilliams@ci.lake-jackson.tx.us

Visit our Website at  
[www.ci.lake-jackson.tx.us](http://www.ci.lake-jackson.tx.us)





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## Boards & Commissions Meeting Schedule



### **City Council**

6:30p.m. • 1st & 3rd Monday

### **Planning Commission**

7 p.m. • 1st Tuesday

### **Youth Advisory Commission**

(meets at police station)

6 p.m. • 1st Tuesday

### **Traffic Commission**

7 p.m. • 2nd Tuesday

### **Keep Lake Jackson Beautiful**

6 p.m. • 3rd Tuesday

### **Senior Citizen Commission**

(meets at civic center)

6:30 p.m. • 4th Monday

### **Parks & Recreation Board**

7 p.m. • 4th Tuesday

### **Library Board**

(meets at library)

5:15 p.m. • Quarterly - 3rd Tuesday

### **As Called:**

Animal Control

Board of Health

LJ Development Corporation

Museum Board

Zoning Board of Adjustments

Charter Review Commission (Odd Years)

*All meetings,*

*unless otherwise noted, are held at*

*Lake Jackson City Hall • 25 Oak Drive*

*You are cordially invited to attend.*



## LJPD-Blue Santa Program

The Lake Jackson Police Department Blue Santa Program is underway. This program began with a very small group of Police Officers from the Lake Jackson Police Department donating and delivering toys and food to less fortunate families throughout the city of Lake Jackson. For many years members of the Lake Jackson Police Department, Department Associates and City Employees have continued the Blue Santa tradition by compiling a list of families, shopping for the families, wrapping, then delivering the gifts. As the word spreads about the Blue Santa Program, not only do the calls for assistance increase; but so does the outpouring of generosity from the community, local merchants, as well as citizens and merchants from other cities. In recent years the Blue Santa Program has expanded to the Brazosport area.



Blue Santa is accepting gift donations. You may drop them off at the Police Department located at 25 Oak Drive. A special need is for gifts for older children 5<sup>th</sup> grade and up.

## Holiday Season Safety Tips.

If you are going to be away from home during the holidays you need to:

1. Be sure to have your newspapers and mail stopped.
2. Put timers on your lights.
3. Make your residence looked lived in.
4. Have trusted friends or relatives watch residence.

### Shopping Tips:

1. Do not carry or flash large amounts of cash.
2. Keep packages out of view while in vehicle.
3. Have keys out and ready when you approach vehicle.
4. Check around and inside vehicle when you approach.
5. Do not park in dark or isolated areas.
6. Do not use dark alley ways or stair ways.

### Other safety tips:

1. Keep vehicles locked at all times.
2. Remove purses and other valuables from vehicle.
3. Make sure children stay with adults so they do not get lost in crowded and strange areas.

**POLICE 415-2700**



## FESTIVAL ACTIVITIES

### Teen Beauty Pageant

Sunday, November 12  
LJ Civic Center @ 6:30 p.m.  
Tickets \$8 - pre-sale  
\$10 - at the door

### Tree Lighting Ceremony

Friday, November 17  
LJ Civic Center @ 6:00 pm  
Santa will be there

### Gobbler Cook-off

November 17-18  
Downtown

### Youth Talent Show

Friday, November 17  
Lake Theatre @ 7:00 pm  
Audition & Registration  
November 12th  
Civic Center @ 2:00 pm  
Call Jeri 415-2707

## Saturday, November 18th

### Little Princess Pageant

Civic Center Ballroom @ 10:00 a.m.  
Deadline is November 10

### Food & Craft Booths

Outside Near Civic Center

### Blue Grass Music

12:00 - 5:00 p.m.  
Terrace Rooms

### Photo Contest Exhibit &

'My Favorite Doll Club Exhibit'  
Inside Civic Center

### Parade of Lights

Downtown @ 7:00 p.m.  
Deadline to enter Nov. 16

### LJ Historical Museum

Open FREE all day



## CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Civic Center Parking Lot  
10:00 am – 5:00 pm

- Carnival
- Petting Zoo - Free
- Pony Rides - Free
- Arts & Crafts - Free
- Rockwall - Free
- Survivor Zipline - Free
- Mechanical Swing - Free
- Trackless Trains - Free
- Face Painting- Free
- Snowland 10 a.m. - until ice melts - Free

# ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

**Saturday, November 18**

- 10:00 LJI Choir
- 10:30 4 Real Student Choir
- 11:00 Dance Moves
- 11:30 Jana's School of Dance
- 12:00 Lake Jackson Nei Wai Chi
- 12:30 Brazoswood Buccaneer  
Drum Line
- 1:00 All American Gymnastics
- 1:30 Elite Techniques
- 2:00 Barbie Rhodes Dance Studio
- 2:30 Ballet Folklorico
- 3:00 Attitudes
- 3:30 A Time to Dance
- 4:00 Lake Jackson Promenaders
- 4:30 Kim West School of Dance
- 5:00 Bluebonnet Cloggers
- 5:30 The Keepers
- 8:30 Shake Russell

**Need information?  
Call 415-2500**

# Recreational Events



## Fall Swim Lessons

### Dates -

Session 2: Nov. 7-9 and 14-16  
Session 3: Nov. 28-30 and Dec. 5-7

### AM Classes -

9:00am - 9:30am: adult swim lessons  
(for beginners and non-swimmers)

9:45am - 10:15am: parent/tot lessons  
(for infants and small tots, 3 day class)

10:30am - 11:00am: Level 1 Intro  
(all kids under 4 years, parents in water)

11:15am - 11:45am: Level 1

### PM Classes -

1:30pm - 2:00pm: Level 1

2:15pm - 2:45pm: Level 2

3:00pm - 3:45pm: Level 3

4:00pm - 4:45pm: Level 4/5

### Cost per Session -

\$15 members

\$20 non-members

**Swim with  
Santa**  
at the  
Recreation  
Center

• Games, treats,  
swimming & Santa!  
Saturday, Dec. 9,  
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

## DAD & DAUGHTER DANCE

February 9, 2007

6:00 - 10:00 p.m.

Civic Center Ballroom

Dancing, Refreshments &  
Photography

\$10 per couple - in advance

\$15 per couple - at the door



## TAAF BASKETBALL IS BACK AND BETTER THAN EVER!

For the 2007 season we have 2 leagues to reach out to both recreational & select athletes. Boys and girls ages 5-16 years old will have the opportunity to show off their talent starting January 6<sup>th</sup>. Registration is open through November 19<sup>th</sup> at the Lake Jackson Recreation Center. Cost is \$35 per player for the recreational league and \$350 per team for the select league. For questions or concerns please call Ryan Moreno at 297-4533.

**Rec. Center 297-4533**



# Public Works

**PUBLIC WORKS**  
**415-2430**



## **The Mulch Site has Multi-Purposes!!**

The mulch site takes yard debris and turns it into free mulch for City of Lake Jackson residents. But did you know you can drop off other items there also?

If you have: used cooking oils, antifreeze, tires or motor oil, old gasoline, any recycling materials, then you can take it to the mulch site! Also, if you have Heavy Trash and do not want to wait until your heavy trash week, then you can take it to the Mulch Site! There is a large construction dumpster available for Heavy Trash. And don't forget to bring your limbs and mulch-able items! And while you're there, you can pick up some of the **FREE MULCH** that the City of Lake Jackson provides to its residents!

The Mulch Site is located at 103 Canna Lane. An attendant is on duty to help you dispose of these items properly. Hours of operation are Tuesday through Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm, and Saturday 8:30 am - 3:30 pm. Closed on Sunday and Monday.

## **Permits**

In this day and age, it is increasingly common to see homeowners taking a do it yourself attitude with home repairs, simple remodeling, or adding on a utility shed, patio, or fencing. It is completely within the homeowner's rights and the law for him to do those jobs at his own homestead. However, most of those projects will require a building permit and inspection by the City. Some of the most common areas where permits were not obtained are for utility buildings, decks and patios, and interior remodeling. Remember in most cases a permit and inspection are required, and if you are unsure about the requirements for the project, please contact your City of Lake Jackson Building Official or Building Inspector for information at 415-2430.

## **Senior Citizen Discount on Utility Bills**

Seniors 65 and older are eligible for a discount on water bills. To start receiving the discount bring proof of age to the utility billing department at City Hall.

## **Code Enforcement**

Two of the regulations least understood are the snipe signs ordinance, in particular garage sale signs, and the home occupations (business run in your home) requirements within the zoning ordinance.

Snipe signs are those small signs which are of a temporary nature and taped, tacked, nailed, posted, glued, or similarly attached to trees, poles, stakes, fences or other object. It shall be unlawful to place any snipe signs except garage sale signs within the city. Garage sale signs when posted on their own support and upon the property at which the sale is taking place may be exhibited for two days.

Home occupations (a business in your home) are restricted to the following: home office for a salesman or sales or service representative, an artist studio, musician or music teacher, photographer, writer, tailor, architect, dressmaker, registered family homes (less than 12 children) or similar occupations. In addition, the following restrictions are required: cannot cause a significant increase in traffic or receive regular deliveries from delivery trucks, cannot interfere with the primary use of the home as a residence, cannot display or sell stock and trade at the home except custom made to order, must be conducted entirely within the home and not visible from any other residence or public way, shall not have outside storage of equipment or materials, cannot cause annoyance by noise, vibration, heat, glare, or electrical or magnetic interference by use of mechanical, electrical, or other equipment, and no persons other than family members residing on the premise shall be engaged in the business unless required by the licensing authority. So if you are not sure if what you are planning as a home business is acceptable, call 415-2430.



## Health

The truths of Food Safety are sometimes the exact opposite of what we perceive or have been told for a large portion of our life. Here are a few of the more common ones:

***“The other day the guy took my money and then went back and fixed my food without washing his hands, and money carries so many germs.”*** This is part true and part false, he should wash his hands because he left the food station and returned, but the germ-infested money is false. Our money is treated and does not support the growth of bacteria. Tests have been run on thousands of bills for many years and the results are that the bills do not support the transfer or growth of bacteria.

***“With the E. Coli bacteria in beef, all beef should be cooked well done.”*** Not all beef needs to be cooked well done, or to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F. The bacteria is spread on the outer surface of beef which during a steaks cooking the area where the bacteria lies is well seared reaching well over the temperature required to kill it. But when we grind meat we mix the insides and outside surface together, thus mixing the bacteria. So Steaks, Roasts, and whole cuts of meat can be cooked medium or rare, any ground product must be cooked to an internal temperature of 165 degrees to insure its safety.

***“The workers in that restaurant wear gloves so it is safer.”*** If they are following all the proper procedures that might be true, but the problem is that this rarely happens and gloves tend to give a false sense of security and are frequently abused. When we wear gloves we tend to feel we have a barrier against bacteria which when combined with the fact that we no longer can feel the dirt, grit, slime, or moisture we have put on the gloves we forget to exchange them for a new pair as frequently as we should. Where on the bare hand those slimy chicken juices tell us to go wash our hands.

***“I heard that the restaurants always get warned before the inspector visits.”*** Most health agencies do not give any warning to food establishments prior to inspection. While the frequency of inspections might give an operator the indication that they are due for an inspection, the date and time of the inspection are pretty random and unknown to the food operators. I know this is true in Lake Jackson, because the locations to be inspected are sometimes

not decided until I pull into their parking lot. I have made inspection from Monday to Sunday, from 5:00 AM to 11:00PM. If they are open they should be operating properly and should be able to pass an inspection. If you have any questions relating to food safety, call 415-2430.

**Rating Placard in Food Services** - Each time a food service is inspected, they are given a rating placard to display. It will be excellent, good, or satisfactory, and should be on display where visible by the customer. But what do these ratings really mean? Think of them as school grades, excellent is an A, good is a B, and satisfactory is a C. Also remember that even those that are not excellent are required to make corrections of the violations, usually immediately. These ratings are for the health and sanitation procedures of the food service and in no way are reflective of other influences such as taste of product or price. Another important thing to take note of is the consistency of the rating. A place that scores a good rating all the time is usually safer than one that scores an excellent one inspection and a satisfactory the next. Another point to know is that while most establishments will receive inspection about every four months, these are random inspections and the establishment has no knowledge of their date and time. But with food safety in mind it is always excellent to dine with the places that have an excellent record of being excellent, i.e. “the straight “A” student”.

## Large trash schedule

Large trash is collected twice a month; items include branches, old furniture and old appliances. Crews may not get to your house on Monday, but they will continue to pick up until they are finished with the route. **City crews will only go through your area once during your assigned week.**

If your regular garbage is picked up on Monday and Thursday, put your heavy trash out by 8 am on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month.

If your regular garbage pickup is on Tuesday and Friday, put your heavy trash out by 8 am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month.

There is no heavy trash pickup scheduled the week of any 5<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month.

# Fire

## Christmas Fire Safety Tips

From: The Lake Jackson  
Fire Marshal & Vol. Fire Dept.

The Holiday season is upon us. This is a time of joy but there is also an element of danger. To keep your holiday season joyful, I would like to take a few moments to discuss important safety issues.

Christmas along with Hanukkah is undoubtedly the highlight of the holiday season. Gatherings of people, food, drink, fancy clothing, candles, decorations and the fireplace are all part of these events.

New Year's comes right around the corner and we are all exhausted. The issue of our personal and loved ones safety tends to take a back seat to all of this celebration. Holiday safety should be part of our planning when preparing for these festive days. Below are a few suggestions to make your holiday season remembered for it's joyfulness and not for it's tragedy.

### A Few Suggestions

- Be sure to test your smoke detectors.
- Clean the oven and stove prior to the holiday. Often the extra load on these appliances causes a fire due to the high use and extra grease build-up.
- Keep kitchen clutter away from the stove and oven.
- Be extra careful with matches and candles. Candles should be made of flame retardant materials - look for a label stating such.
- Avoid loose, flammable clothing. Clothing often catches on fire around candles, matches, fireplaces and stoves (both electric and gas).
- Keep decorations away from sources of heat such as open flames, electric heaters and exposed electric bulbs.
- Don't overload electric outlets. Inspect electrical cords and light sets. If in doubt - throw them out.



### Christmas Lights

- Purchase only UL approved lights.
- Check all indoor and outdoor lights for frayed cords and replace if necessary.
- Never use lights that have an empty socket.
- Lights should not touch combustible materials.
- Use only outdoor lights for "outdoors".
- Turn off all Christmas lights, prior to leaving your home or going to bed.
- Mini lights are safest because they produce less heat.
- Avoid using extension cords, but if you must, follow instructions carefully.
- Do not overload electrical circuits, such as wall outlets and extension cords, use a circuit strip.

### Christmas Wrappings

- Keep combustible materials away from heat sources.
- Never burn wrappings in your fireplace.





## Choosing a Tree

Christmas trees are involved in approximately 400 fires annually, according to the National Fire Protection Association, typically resulting in more than a dozen deaths, dozens of injuries and more than \$10 million in property loss and damage. Shortcircuiting tree lights are cited as the leading cause. As the holidays approach, the State Fire Marshal's Office offers these safety tips for choosing and preparing Christmas trees for decoration that will minimize the risk of fire and injuries.

- If you're buying an artificial tree, it should bear the "Fire Resistant" label. While this type of tree can catch fire, it will resist burning and should extinguish quickly.
- If you're buying a natural tree, buy the freshest you can find. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. The trunk butt is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles. Watch out for trees with a greenish cast to their trunks and branches; many growers spray trees with green paint to make them look more appealing. Cut at least one inch off the trunk's base to expose fresh wood for better water absorption. A tree will absorb as much as a gallon of water

or more in the first 24 hours and one or more quarts a day thereafter. A seal of dried sap will form over the cut stump in four to six hours if water drops below the base of the tree, preventing the tree from absorbing water later when the tree stand is refilled. If a seal does form, another fresh cut will need to be made.

- To maximize freshness and minimize fire risk, keep the tree outdoors for a few days in a bucket filled with water before bringing it indoors to decorate. The tree stand should hold at least one gallon of water.
- Because heated rooms dry out natural trees rapidly, keep the stand filled with water; check the water level daily. A six-foot tree will absorb one gallon of water every two days.
- Spraying the Christmas tree with a flame retardant is always a good idea.
- Place the tree away from heat sources, such as fireplaces and heaters.
- Do not use candles on or near the tree.
- Safely dispose of your tree before it becomes dangerously dry, however never burn tree or tree parts in your fireplace.

## Safe End to the Holiday Season

For many folks, it's hard to let go of the holiday spirit.

After gifts are opened, quickly discard the wrapping paper and packaging in a safe manner. Wrapping paper is very flammable. Never burn gift wrapping in the fireplace or wood stove. It can ignite suddenly and cause a flash fire. Some gift wrapping contains material that can throw off dangerous sparks and/or cause a dangerous chemical buildup in the air of your house. Gift wrapping burns very hot, causing large flames, which can ignite creosote deposits in the chimney and cause a fire in the chimney.

Remove outdoor lights as soon as the season is over; they are not designed for prolonged exposure to the elements, especially in winter weather. Careful handling of lights when you are taking them down and repacking them will reduce the chances of damaging a good set of lights.

In closing, every home should have an operating fire extinguisher and smoke detector. From our family to your family, wishing you a happy and safe holiday season.



# Public Health Preparedness



In case of a major public health emergency, it may become necessary to provide preventive medications to everyone in Brazoria County. In some circumstances, we will be required to distribute the medicine within a 48 hour time frame. This is accomplished using medication that is part of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) program.

Under the SNS program, the county will request the medications in the form of a 12 hour push-pack from the federal government. This push-pack includes medications and equipment specifically designed for these types of emergencies. It can be delivered anywhere in the US and its Territories within 12 hours by air or land. The entire package is containerized on movable carts that are designed to be moved by one or two people. If shipped by air, it will fill an aircraft the size of a Boeing 747.

Once the medication reaches Brazoria County, the County is responsible for distributing the medications. The Brazoria County Health Department SNS Team has developed a plan that requires approximately **2500 volunteers** to complete the distribution to all 270,000+ residents of the county within the required timeframe.

Currently there are approximately 300 volunteers enrolled.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

### What we need:

2500 Volunteers who will work with the team to provide medications to our neighbors.

### What will the volunteers do?

There is a wide variety of tasks that must be completed. Volunteers will be assigned tasks based on their skills and abilities. We have a task for everyone! **NO MEDICAL TRAINING IS REQUIRED.**

Some of the tasks are:

- Distribution of information about the medication or agent
- Assisting with form completion
- Facilitating the flow of traffic inside or outside the POD
- Data entry
- Communications
- Drivers
- Phone Bank
- POD Management
- Translation assistance

### What is required?

Volunteers must:

- Be 18 years old
- Live or work in Brazoria County
- Have reliable transportation
- Have a Government issued picture ID
- Complete a 3-hour orientation
- Participate in at least one exercise per year

### How does it work?

The Public Health Preparedness Team will be called out when the Health Department has determined that mass prophylaxis will be required. The volunteers will be notified before the general public and told to report to a location where they will receive their medications and medications for their immediate family before dispensing medications to the public.

Once on site, the volunteers will check in, be assigned a supervisor, be briefed, and given mission assignments. Missions will be assigned based on capabilities and needs. A volunteer might be assigned to any task based on mission objectives including set up or demobilization of the POD sites. Volunteers will work 12 hour shifts. Dispensing will continue until everyone who needs medication has received it.

### How do I Volunteer?

Contact Homeland Preparedness Project at 281-844-3653 or e-mail [volunteer@homelandpreparedness.org](mailto:volunteer@homelandpreparedness.org).





# For Your Information



## Public Meetings Notice

### Public meetings to be held in November on Transit Service in Southern Brazoria County

Public meetings are scheduled to be held regarding transit services in Southern Brazoria County on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. The meetings will be held in the following locations:

- Lake Jackson Meeting, November 13  
Lake Jackson Civic Center
- Angleton Meeting, November 14  
Angleton City Hall
- Freeport/Clute Meeting, November 16  
Riverplace Community Center (tentative)

A&R Consulting of Houston is conducting a transit feasibility study, which has been sponsored by the cities of Lake Jackson, Angleton, Freeport and Clute. The purpose of the meetings will be to gather public input, perspective and concerns to assist the consultant in developing proposed transportation solutions that best meet the real world public transit needs in Southern Brazoria County. Information regarding possible public transit approaches will be discussed in a short presentation.

The goal of the study is to provide an informed perspective on the viability of additional transit services in Southern Brazoria County. Connect Transportation, which provides demand response service in Southern Brazoria County, will also provide assistance for the study.

## New City Attorney

*A Goodbye and a Welcome*

**After 33 years as our City Attorney, John Dewey has handed over the reigns to our new City Attorney, Sherri Russell.**

John Dewey personifies the term "gentleman". He served our city with dignity, integrity, and professionalism. John has guided our city through many a legal storm always delivering us safely to the other side.

John has a strong conservative philosophy which has guided him and the City over these past 33 years. He exemplifies the spirit of unselfish public service. We will miss him very much.

At the same time, we welcome with open arms Ms. Sherri Russell. Ms. Russell comes to us from Waco where she served as Assistant City Attorney. Ms. Russell graduated from the University of Houston with a degree in Psychology. After a four year stint in the United States Air Force as an intelligence officer, she attended St. Mary's University School of Law. Sherri has previously worked for the Bexar County Criminal District Court Administration; the Fourth Court of Appeals; was briefly a solo practitioner; and, work for the City of San Marcos as Assistant City Attorney prior to going to work for the City of Waco.

Sherri and her family are settling into our community and we look forward to her putting her strong legal experience to work for our city.



The City of Lake Jackson has **Cable Channel 16** to provide a variety of information to you, the citizen. We hope you find this information useful. For questions concerning information on this channel, contact Kim Knapp at 415-2407.

# Budget



## Tax Rate Drops

City Council adopted a 37 cent tax rate for Fiscal Year 2006-07. This is one cent lower than the 38 cent tax rate in FY2005-06. This 37 cent tax rate is 3.4% higher than the "effective tax rate" established by a state mandated formula. But, more important to you is what does this do to my "bottom line".

The other component of establishing what each of us ultimately pay in property taxes is what the appraised value of our home is. According to the County Appraisal District the average price of a home in Lake Jackson (in round numbers) went up from \$126,000 to \$128,000 – or a 1.58% increase. So if you had an "average \$126,000" home in 2005-2006 paid city taxes of \$478.80. And if you have the "average \$128,000" home in 2006-07 you will pay \$473.60. Your individual taxes will vary based on your appraised value and whether it went down, up – or stayed the same.

## Senior Tax Discount Increases

City Council once again increased the "exemption" for those 65 and older and for our disabled residents. It rose from \$50,000 to \$55,000. So, with the lower tax rate and the average price of a home increasing from \$126,000 to \$128,000, the taxes paid by a senior in FY2005-06 was \$288.80. In FY2006-07 a senior in a \$128,000 home will pay \$270.10.

## Utility Rates Increase

With rising energy costs and continuing State and Federal requirements our utility rates will increase as follows:

Basic Rates			
Service	Previous	Adopted	
Water	\$7.50/mo	\$7.50/mo	
Sewer	8.00/mo	8.50/mo	
Sanitation	13.00/mo	13.25/mo	
Recycle	2.00/mo	2.00/mo	
Sales Tax	1.23/mo	1.25/mo	
	\$31.73/mo	\$32.50/mo	+ 2.4%

Note: Seniors 65 and older receive a 40% discount on base water and sewer. This equals to a \$6.40 discount per month.

Also – the sewer fee over the base rate is increasing from \$2.85/1,000 gallons to \$2.95/1,000 gallons. Sewer treatment has become our most costly utility endeavor. And, commercial sanitation rates are increasing 10%.

The voter approved Brazoria County Conservation District is assessing each city 3¢/1,000 gallons of water pumped from our 11 water wells. This fee is being passed directly through to rate payers.

## Major Items Affecting Our Budget Include:

- Electric costs city wide are going up 18.5% (over \$400,000 more) than FY 05-06. The majority of this will be felt on the Utility side (\$289,410).
- Fuel costs are going up nearly 30% over FY 05-06 or \$86,656 city-wide.
- Property insurance costs have escalated as the result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita by 51.3% (\$79,885).
- Employees are receiving a 2% lump sum incentive pay for all employees in December from year end surplus of \$140,000 for the General Fund and \$40,000 for the Utility Fund.
- Employees may receive merit raises ranging from 3%, 4% or 5% based on their evaluations. We have budgeted \$248,000 additional (2.75%) funding for these employee raises.
- We increased the retirement contributions of each employee from 5% to 6%. Since the city matches employee contributions 2-1, the cost to the city is \$124,900. This will keep our retirement package in line with other cities. Our city also participates in the Social Security system.
- There are no new employees provided in this budget. Conversely there are no lay offs provided either.
- The Southern Brazoria County Animal Shelter requested \$102,000 for FY 06-07. This is a \$6,000 (6.25%) increase.

## Budget Changes

### Code Enforcement

To improve code enforcement, especially related to the abatement of dangerous structures, Council approved adding \$42,179 to the inspections department. The increased revenues are from adopting a 37¢ tax rate.

### MacLean Park Pavilion

Council authorized an additional \$14,000 from the General Capital Projects Fund to fund the repainting of the MacLean Park Pavilion.



# Budget



## Tourism Increase

City Council heard a request from the Brazosport Chamber of Commerce to increase funding for their tourism activities from \$70,000 to \$100,000 out of the Motel Occupancy Tax Fund. City Council approved \$80,000 for FY06-07.

## Drainage Fee

City Council requested and received additional information about the possibility of creating a fee dedicated to drainage improvements. This will be discussed during Fiscal Year 2006-07 and may be adopted by Council at that time.

## Multi-Family Code Enforcement Fee

Council is mulling the idea of creating a monthly fee per apartment unit which would pay for a new inspector whose primary responsibility will be to routinely inspect all multi-family rental units and see that they are kept up to code. Council will review this information during FY06-07 and decide whether to implement this mid-year or wait until FY07-08.

## Red Light Cameras

Some members of Council have asked that staff explore the legal process and cost of installing camera's on various traffic lights in town to catch drivers running red lights. The purpose would be to reduce accidents and improve safety.

Again this program will be looked at during FY06-07 for possible action.

## Teen Court

The Boys and Girls Club no longer are receiving grants to fund the Teen Court. Council has regularly authorized \$2,500 from our Youth Advisory Commission budget to help fund this court. Pearland, Angleton, and Brazoria County have authorized \$20,000 a piece. We were asked for and Council approved our standard \$2,500 contribution.

## BISD Interlocal Agreement

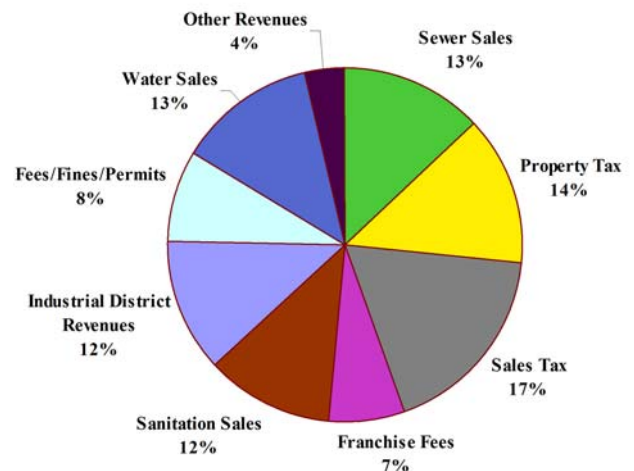
The City provides a police officer in the Lake Jackson Intermediate School through an interlocal agreement with the BISD. The costs to provide an officer is offset by BISD funding and grant funding. An experienced sergeant was placed in the school to get the program started. At this time we have agreed to replace the

sergeant with a police officer. Since the salary for an officer is less than a sergeant position, staff recommended and Council approved that the contract be adjusted accordingly to reflect the new salary. This reduced BISD's contribution to the City over the next three years by \$47,000 (\$17,200 this fiscal year).

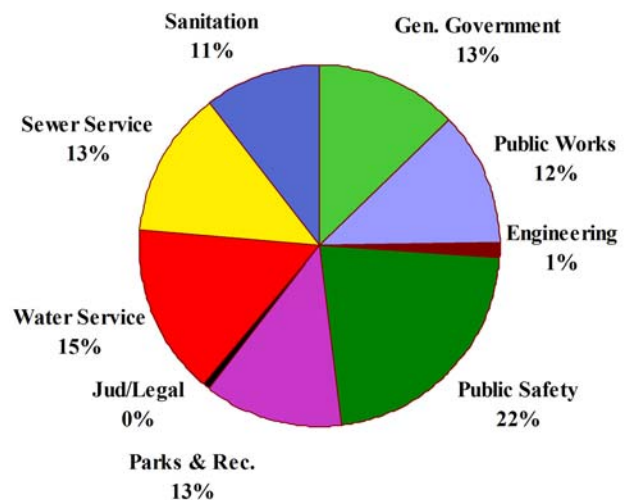
## Brazoria County Conservation District

Voters approved a Brazoria County Groundwater Conservation District this year. This new district is levying a 3¢/1,000 gallons of water fee for all groundwater we pump.

## Where does the money come from?



## Where does the money go?





City of Lake Jackson  
25 Oak Drive  
Lake Jackson, TX 77566

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US POSTAGE  
PAID  
DIRECT EFFECT  
Permit 32

Postal Customer

## *The City of* *Enchantment*

### **The City of Lake Jackson, Texas Smoke free Air Act**

As a lot of you might have noticed, since May 2006, there is no smoking in most public buildings. That is when the city ordinance regulating it went into effect. In a nutshell it prohibits smoking in enclosed public places except private residences, designated smoking rooms in hotels and motels (with restrictions), retail tobacco stores, private clubs, bars, pool halls, bingo facilities, bowling facilities, private offices and public transportation facilities.

All facilities where smoking is prohibited shall have no smoking signs on the entryway doors in locations designated by the ordinance. A facility may have a smoking section provided that it is in compliance with the code of ordinances recording solid wall isolation, separate isolated ventilation systems, and floor space restriction.

Smoking is prohibited within a 15 feet radius from any exterior door and operable windows outside an enclosed area where smoking is prohibited. Any person who smokes in an area where smoking is prohibited may be punishable by a fine not exceeding fifty dollars. An owner, operator, or manager of a facility covered by this ordinance may be fined one hundred dollars for the first offense for failure to comply, with increasing amounts for second and third offenses.

Further information regarding this ordinance may be obtained on the City Website, or by contacting the Health Inspector for the city at 979-415-2430.

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**Black garbage bags can be purchased at City Hall for \$6.50**  
**Blue recycle bags may be purchased at City Hall for \$6.00**